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A Brief Biography of Al-‘Allāmah Muḥammad bin Ṣāliḥ Al-‘Uthaimīn رَحِمَهُ اللهُ 1347-1421H

His Name, Lineage and Birth

He is the virtuous *Shaikh*, the scholar, the *Muḥaqqiq*, the *Faqīh*, the *Mufasssir*, the *Wari'*, the *Zāhid*, Muḥammad bin Ṣāliḥ bin Muḥammad bin ‘Abdur-Raḥmān Āl ‘Uthaimīn, from Al-Wahbah, from Banū At-Tamīm.

He was born on the eve of the 27th of the blessed month of Ramaḍān, in the year 1347 H, in ‘Unaizah - one of the cities of Al-Qaṣīm - in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

His Educational Upbringing

His father - may Allāh have mercy upon him - enrolled him as a student to learn the Noble Qur’ān, with his maternal grandfather, the teacher ‘Abdur-Raḥmān bin Sulaimān Ad-Dāmigh, may Allāh have mercy upon him.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allāh, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

Bism^[4]



^[4] The author, may Allāh have mercy upon him, began his book with the *Basmalah* (the saying: *Bismillāh Ar-Rahmān Ar-Rahīm* — meaning, in the Name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful) emulating the Book of Allāh, the Mighty and Sublime, since it begins with the *Basmalah* and, also, in accordance with the *Ḥadīth*: “Every noble matter not commenced with the *Basmalah* is severed from prosperity.”

[In *Al-Jāmi’ aṣ-Ṣaghīr*, As-Suyūṭī attributed it to Ar-Rahāwī (4:147), and Al-Khaṭīb recorded it in *Al-Jāmi’* (2:69). The *Ḥadīth* has been reported through many routes of transmission with a variety of wordings. And our *Shaikh*, Al-’Allāmah Muḥammad Al-’Uṭhaimīn (may Allāh have mercy upon him and protect him) was asked about this *Ḥadīth*, so he said: “The scholars differed regarding the authenticity of this *Ḥadīth*; so among the people of knowledge are those who graded it *Ṣaḥīḥ*, and An-Nawawī relied upon that, and among them are those who graded it weak. But the scholars have met this *Ḥadīth* with acceptance, and their placing of the *Ḥadīth* in their books indicates that it has a basis.” End quote from *Kitāb al-’Ilm*, by our virtuous *Shaikh*.]

It also emulates the Messenger ﷺ who began his letters with the *Basmalah*.

This prepositional phrase is connected to a relative verb that comes after the prepositional phrase, which is understood, but not spoken or written. The unspoken verb is “In the Name of Allāh” I write. The unspoken meaning is a verb, because the origins of actions are verbs. There are two benefits in the unspoken meaning coming after the prepositional phrase.

Firstly: Seeking blessing by beginning in the Name of Allāh, the Glorious and the Exalted.

Allāh^[5] *Ar-Raḥmān*^[6] *Ar-Raḥīm*^[7]

Secondly: The benefit of restriction, since this restriction expresses that it is the only reason for writing.

The unspoken meaning is relative to the action being performed, since this indicates the intent. If we were to say, for example, when we want to recite a book, "In the Name of Allāh we begin," what we are beginning would not be understood. However, "In the Name of Allāh I read" indicates the intent of what I am beginning.

^[5] Allāh: is a proper noun for the Inventor of all things (*Al-Bārī*) — the Sublime and Exalted — and is the Name which every other one of His Names follow, such that in His saying, the Exalted:

﴿كَتَبْنَا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ لِتُخْرِجَ النَّاسَ مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَمِيدِ ۝ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَوَيْلٌ لِلْكَافِرِينَ مِنْ عَذَابٍ شَدِيدٍ﴾

﴿(This is) a Book which We have revealed unto you in order that you might lead mankind out of darkness into light, by their Lord's permission, to the path of Al-'Azīz (the All-Mighty) Al-Ḥamīd (the Owner of all praise). Allāh, to Whom belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth! And woe unto the disbelievers from a severe torment﴾ (Ibrāhīm 14:1-2)

We do not say that the expression of Majesty, "Allāh," is an adjective. It is considered an explanatory apposition, so that it is not rendered in the manner in which an adjective normally follows the noun (that it describes or qualifies).

^[6] *Ar-Raḥmān*: is one of the unique Names of Allāh, the Mighty and Sublime, not used for other than Him. It means — the possessor of extensive mercy.

^[7] *Ar-Raḥīm*: is used for Allāh, the Mighty and Sublime, and

اعْلَمْ رَحِمَكَ اللَّهُ أَنَّهُ يَجِبُ عَلَيْنَا تَعَلُّمُ أَرْبَعِ مَسَائِلَ؛

Know,^[8]

for other than Him. It means the One who possesses bestowed mercy. So *Ar-Raḥmān* is the possessor of extensive mercy and *Ar-Raḥīm* is the One who possesses bestowed mercy. When put together (with *Ar-Raḥmān*), the intent of the word *Ar-Raḥīm* becomes: the One who bestows His Mercy upon whom He wills among His slaves, as He, Exalted is He, says:

﴿يُعَذِّبُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَرْحَمُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُقْلَبُونَ﴾

﴿He punishes whom He wills, and shows mercy to whom He wills, and to Him you will be returned﴾ (Al-'Ankabūt 29:21)

^[8] *Al-'Ilm* (knowledge), is the realization of a matter in its determined, proper sense, and there are six levels regarding realization:

The first: Knowledge; and it is the realization of a matter in its determined, proper sense.

The second: Plain ignorance; and it is the complete absence of realization.

The third: Compounded ignorance; and it is to realize a thing in a manner that opposes its reality.

The fourth: Delusion; and it is to realize a thing along with an implication that is opposite to what is appropriate.

The fifth: Doubt; and it is to realize a thing along with an implication of there being an equal probability (of being correct or incorrect).

The sixth: Assumption; and it is to realize a thing, along with a likelihood that contradicts what is incorrect.

And knowledge is divided into two categories: Necessary and contemplative.

may Allāh have mercy with you,^[9] that it is obligatory upon us to learn four issues:^[10]

الأولى : العِلْمُ وَهُوَ مَعْرِفَةُ اللَّهِ وَمَعْرِفَةُ نَبِيِّهِ وَمَعْرِفَةُ دِينِ
الإِسْلَامِ بِالْأَدِلَّةِ.

The first: Knowledge; and it is knowing Allāh,^[11]

As for the necessary form, it refers to realizing what is known necessarily, in that it is bound to be known without contemplation or evidence; like the knowledge that fire burns. The contemplative is that which requires contemplation and evidence; like the knowledge of the obligation to have an intention before performing *Wuḍū*.

^[9] “May Allāh have mercy with you:” May He bestow His mercy upon you, through which you achieve your aspirations and are saved from what troubles you. So the meaning is; “May Allāh pardon your past sins, and fortify you, and protect you regarding what is to come of that. And this is when *Rahmah* (mercy) is mentioned alone. But when it is mentioned together with *Maghfirah* (pardon), the *Maghfirah* refers to the past sins, while the *Rahmah* refers to success in goodness, and safety from sins in the future. By the author doing this — may Allāh, Exalted is He, have mercy upon him — it indicates his concern and compassion for the one being addressed, as well as his good intention for him.

^[10] These issues, mentioned by the author, may Allāh, the Exalted is He, have mercy upon him, include the entire religion. And due to their great benefits, they are worthy of proper consideration.

^[11] That is, knowing Allāh, the Mighty and Sublime, with the heart in a manner which necessitates the acceptance of what He legislates, submitting to and obeying Him, and judging by the legislation which His Messenger, Muḥammad ﷺ brought.

knowing His Prophet^[12], and knowing the religion of

The slave recognizes his Lord by reflecting on the legislative *Āyāt* in the Book of Allāh, the Mighty and the Sublime, and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger ﷺ, and by pondering the universal *Āyāt* which are His creation. For each time a person ponders those *Āyāt*, his knowledge increases of his Creator, the One whom he worships. Allāh, the Mighty and Sublime, says:

﴿وَفِي الْأَرْضِ آيَاتٌ لِلْمُوقِنِينَ ۝ وَفِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ﴾

﴿And on the earth are signs for those who have faith with certainty. And also in yourselves. Will you not then see?﴾
(*Adh-Dhāriyāt* 51:20-21)

^[12] That is, knowing His Messenger Muḥammad ﷺ in a manner that requires accepting what he came with of guidance and the true religion, and trusting all that he informed of, implementing his orders, and staying away from all that he prohibited and warned against, and judging according to his legislation, and being pleased with his judgments. Allāh, the Mighty and Sublime, says:

﴿فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّى يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِّمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا﴾

﴿But no, by your Lord, they can have no faith, until they make you judge in all disputes between them, and find in themselves no resistance against your decisions, and accept (them) with full submission﴾ (An-Nisā' 4:65)

He, Exalted is He, also said:

﴿إِنَّمَا كَانَ قَوْلَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذَا دُعُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَهُمْ أَنْ يَقُولُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ﴾